The
REPORTER
For Conscience' Sake

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Civilian Work Program Set Up in 30 States; Several Private Non Profit Agencies OK'd

As this goes to press, thirty states (for purpose of this discussion Puerto Rico, New York City, District of Columbia are considered "states" since they have Selective Service Directors) have established facilities for the employment of conscientious objectors within their bounds. In addition, three private nonprofit agencies have been approved by the national office of Selective Service for the employment of objectors. Several other private nonprofit agencies operating exclusively within the bounds of individual states have been approved by state Selective Service directors. Three federal agencies have been approved.

Out of the thirty states which have made arrangements to employ conscientious objectors, twenty-three will receive applications for employment only from men within the state. They are Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Wyoming, and Wisconsin. The seven remaining states of the group giving employment will receive applications from men outside the state as well as from within the state. They are Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, New York City, and Vermont. The remaining states have not yet laid plans to employ conscientious objectors.

The private nonprofit agencies which have been approved to employ objectors are the Brethren Service Commission, 22 South State Street, Elgin, Illinois; Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania; and the Near East Foundation, 54 East 64th Street, New York 21, New York. The three federal agencies which have been approved are the United States Public Health Service, the Veterans Administration, and the Indian Service. All three can be addressed at Washington 25, D. C. The latter two will employ only medical men and allied specialists.

The breakdown of agencies which will employ conscientious objectors reveals that state TB sanatoriums, mental institutions, and general hospitals top the list. To date over one hundred of these institutions have been listed as employers.

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STUDENTS WITH I-O TO HAVE WORK ORDERS POSTPONED UNTIL END OF SCHOOL YEAR

A recent directive by National Selective Service to State Directors will allow students in I-O to have their work orders postponed till the end of the school year, as long as students are doing full-time satisfactory work. Even though Selective Service has ruled that conscientious objectors cannot receive statutory classification in I-S (since a work order is different from an order to report for induction, upon which a statutory deferment is based) the new directive postpones the work order until the end of the year. Following is the pertinent paragraph of the directive:

> "In order to permit a Class I-O registrant to complete his academic year if he is found to be satisfactorily pursuing a full-time course of instruction at a college, university, or similar institution of learning at the time he is reached for selection for civilian work in lieu of induction, the local board shall postpone the issuance of the Order to Report for Civilian Work and Statement of Employer (SSS Form No. 153) until the end of the registrant's current academic year. No registrant shall be given more than one postponement under the provisions of this bulletin. Such postponement may be terminated and the registrant ordered to report for civilian work in lieu of induction immediately if at any time during his current academic year he ceases to satisfactorily pursue his course of instruction."

This means that a student, who is I-O and receives a work order while in school full-time, should immediately get a statement from the principal or dean of the school stating he is pursuing satisfactory full-time work and send it to the local board, and at the same time ask for a postponement of the work order.

"THE OBJECTOR" FROM ENGLAND

Periodically we receive "The Objector," news from the Central Board for Conscientious Objectors in England, which is issued as occasion warrants. Here are some excerpts from a recent issue:

"In September, 1950, we were able to announce, 'Cheshire Recants.' Now it is the local authority of Southend-on-Sea which public opinion has forced to raise its ban on the employment of COs."

"The first National Serviceman to object to his part-time service is Robert Burrett, of Holloway, who reported to his unit on 11th of August, refused to put on uniform and was sentenced to 92 days' detention. On 12th October, the tribunal advised the War Office to discharge him and this advice took effect a fortnight later. Robert Burrett is a Methodist who had been influenced by speakers from Kingsway Hall Mission."

* * *

"The Objector by Jeb Stuart (John Lehman, IOS. 6d.).

"This is a very good novel about an American conscientious objector caught up in the military machine.

"It is, of course, of special interest to COs, but it should not be read for that reason. Jeb Stewart is not deliberately grinding an axe. He is writing a novel. And he writes with brilliant discipline, vividly, able to say in a few exact words what more ponderous writers fail to say in several chapters.

"Heath, the CO, registers as an objector, hoping to work in a medical corps, but for some reason he is drafted to an artillery unit. The story is of his refusal to handle a rifle, his efforts to get transferred to a medical corps, the prejudice and opposition he meets, and his eventual death. Because of this background the novel gives an extraordinary revealing picture, not only of the killing and reckless material destruction of war, but of the tyranny of the military, system and its effect upon individual human beings."

* * *

"Despite an assurance which the Board has received that there is no change in the Ministry's practice, proceedings have been instituted against two COs who have already been prosecuted twice for refusal of medical examinations and have paid fines much larger than those imposed on Colin Moore and Raymond Gibson."

COs IN HOLLAND

Paula Thijssen, Dutch MCC worker in Heerewegen, Holland, says of the COs in that country:

"Our group of Dutch Doopsgezinden who believe in following the Lord in our witness for peace and non-resistance is very small, about 500 members which is about one per cent of our Brotherhood. We have one full-time worker, Brother Cor Inja from Baarn. He has to do all the work for the COs—contacting the Ministry of War and the other peace organizations, visiting prisons and camps, besides doing pastoral work by organizing Bible conferences for the COs, visiting their families and receiving boys who want advice at his home. Then he has to visit the churches who ask for a speaker on the subject of non-resistance. There is a growing interest in our Doopsgeezinde churches, I am happy to say. It is not only the Doopsgezinde COs we have to care for; there is the peculiar fact that other churches and religious groups like the FOR use our Mennonite Peace Bureau and send their boys for help to us."

"At present the Dutch law permits acknowledged COs to do civilian work such as draining and clearing land, but unacknowledged ones are in prison, separated from common criminals, however. Because Queen Julianna and the Minister of War are favorably inclined toward the COs there is hope that the new law will give objectors more liberties. Now they are not permitted a public hearing nor may they appeal to a higher court."

BRITISH SYSTEM AT WORK

A sample of the operation of the British System is contained in the following paragraph from "The Friend":

A CO's APPEAL

"James A. Troup, of Edinburgh Meeting, secretary of Scottish Young Friends, who has completed training for teaching, appealed against his tribunal's condition of non-combatant service. He has now been registered as a conscientious objector on condition that he undertakes hospital work."

CASTANER ALUMNI LETTER

The COs and others who were at Castaner in Puerto Rico regularly issue the "Castaner Alumni Letter." Our thanks for the copy which is sent to the NSB office. Knowing many of the "alumni" through other than CPS contacts, we have come to feel a part of the fellowship.

SEGREGATION QUESTION OMITTED ON PRESENT CLASSIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The present Classification Questionnaire, SSS Form 100, has deleted a question on race which was included on this form in a previous edition.

The previous issue of the Questionnaire had the following item under Series XII: "2. My race is White ☐; Negro ☐; Oriental ☐; Indian ☐; Other _____ (specify)." This question has been deleted entirely from the present Questionnaire. This is in keeping with the policy of the Administration to abandon segregation policies wherever possible within the Federal Government.

SCPC FOR RESEARCH

The Swarthmore College Peace Collection is a resource for research students in the field of conscientious objection, non-resistance, pacifism, and related fields which should not be overlooked. All the records of NSBRO are filed permanently at Swarthmore and are available, except the individual case files of men in CPS, to qualified and properly certified students. Under no circumstances is a file on an individual available to anyone not having written permission from this individual.

CIVILIAN WORK PROGRAM

(Continued from Page 1)

The number is increasing almost daily. In addition, schools for delinquents, reformatories, old folks' homes, colleges, and similar approved institutions number about fifty. The individual "projects" of approved church service agencies number about fifty. Obviously, this makes a total of about two hundred individual "places of employment" for conscientious objectors in this country and abroad.

NSBRO Referral Service

As announced in the REPORTER some months ago, a Referral Service has been set up to help men obtain employment in positions most nearly in keeping with their interests and abilities. Personalized attention will be given to each request for information.

Special Notice

An up-to-date list of employing agencies, complete with names and addresses, is kept at the NSBRO office. Copies can be secured by writing to the National Service Board. Because of the expense involved in reproduction of these lists, twenty cents should be sent for every copy ordered.

A CATHOLIC VIEW OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

The Peacemaker, an Australian pacifist publication, sometime ago carried an article regarding the book "Can a Christian Be a Conscientious Objector?" by Pierre Lorson, S. J., Aux Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1950. The title of the book in French, the language used by the writer, is "Un Cretien peut-il etre Obpecteur de Conscience?" Following is the review:

"When an eminent Catholic theologian devotes a book of 200 pages to the problem of conscientious objection, one must feel that pacifist history is being made.

"Hitherto the Roman Church has refrained from expressing an official view on the subject, as Father Lorson is careful to point out in his book, "Can a Christian Be a Conscientious Objector?" As the Popes have given no ruling the individual Catholic must decide for himself in the light of conscience and the general teaching and example of the Church.

"The Catholic view on the subject of war was laid down by St. Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, when he specified the conditions of a 'just war' in which alone Christians might lawfully participate.

"Some modern Catholic theologians, such as the Austrian, Professor Ude, have contended that no modern war can fulfill those conditions and that therefore every Christian should refuse to take part. The Church, however, has never officially taken this line and, in fact, C. O.'s have been fewer among Catholics than among Protestants.

"Father Lorson begins his exhaustive and judicial study by examining the motives of conscientious objection and the attitudes of various governments towards it. He gives the arguments of prominent theologians both for and against conscientious objection, and examines the historic instances of C. O.'s whom the Church has recognized as saints and martyrs.

"The differentiation between subjective and objective conscience may puzzle some readers, but the author makes clear that the Church recognizes the absolute obligation of conscience, even in opposition to ecclesiastical authority as in the case of St. Joan (a strange model for pacifists!).

"He admits that the character of modern war makes the case for conscientious objection much stronger.

"The cases of typical C. O.'s are critically examined, tribunal fashion, and in most cases the applicant is judged not to have fully substantiated his claim. The reasoning against the claimant may to some seem over subtle, but it is good for all pacifists to be reminded of their responsibilities to society as well as to themselves.

"The book concludes with a powerful plea for the legal recognition of conscientious objection. A most apt plea as the French Assembly is about to consider a Bill on this subject. It may also have some influence on similar Bills now before the Belgian and Italian parliaments."

—H. F. Bing
("Peace News").

RELIGIOUS BODIES MAKING CENSUS OF COs

Many religious bodies are currently making a census of conscientious objectors within their faith. A number of these agencies have devised special registration or enrollment cards which are to be returned to the denomination, at a specified address, by all conscientious objectors.

It is our hope at NSB that all religious bodies will initiate such a census.

BAPTISTS ASK CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS TO SIGN ENROLLMENT CARD

The Baptist Pacifist Fellowship, Leon R. Robinson, President, has asked all pacifists of the Baptist Church to sign the enrollment card recently produced by this organization. The commitment is as follows:

"As I view my loyalty to the Person, Spirit and Teachings of Jesus Christ, my conscience commits me to His way of redemptive love and compels me to refuse to participate in or give moral support to any war."

METHODISTS ASCERTAIN TOTAL OF 841 MEMBERS IN CPS

To determine with accuracy the number of men from any given denomination which were in CPS is sometimes difficult. Even though a figure of 673 is listed as the number of Methodists in CPS in the CPS Directory, the Board on World Peace of the Methodist Church has made a detailed study of many records and has determined that there were 841 Methodists in CPS. These figures were compiled from the administrative records of the agencies administering CPS.

WORLD COUNCIL STATEMENT ON MILITARY PARTICIPATION RECALLED BY MANY RELIGIOUS BODIES

In the process of compiling statements of many religious bodies on conscientious objectors, the NSB staff has discovered that many of the so-called nonhistoric peace churches, in upholding the rights of conscientious objectors, now refer to the Findings and Decisions of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches. In the particular reference three distinct interpretations regarding the Christian's relationship to military service are outlined. Although many *Reporter* readers have read this reference previously, we print it here because of its significance:

"(1) There are those who hold that, even though entering a war may be a Christian's duty in particular circumstances, modern warfare, with its mass destruction, can never be an act of justice.

"(2) In the absence of impartial supra-national institutions, there are those who hold that military action is the ultimate sanction of the rule of law, and that citizens must be distinctly taught that it is their duty to defend the law by force if necessary.

"(3) Others, again, refuse military service of all kinds, convinced that an absolute witness against war and for peace is for them the will of God, and they desire that the Church should speak to the same effect. (Findings and Decisions, First Assembly of the World Council of Churches.")

It will be recalled that this statement was adopted in 1948.

JUDAISM AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION TO WAR

In a recent article entitled "Judaism and Conscientious Objection to War," Rabbi Asher Block, One Hillside Avenue, Great Neck, Long Island, New York, five arguments for the validity of the position held by Jewish conscientious objectors are advanced. (1) Leading associations of Jewish Rabbis have recognized the position; (2) The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia points out that spirit of pacifism is already evident in the Old Testament; (3) Certain non-Jewish sources, particularly John Haynes Holmes, point to the non-resistant and the pacifist history of the Jewish nation; (4) The Jewish Peace Fellowship is supported by leading Jews; (5) Over 100 Jews have been granted the CO classification under the 1940 and 1948 draft laws.

FOR AND IFOR COMMENT ON WORLD COUNCIL CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation, as well as the Fellowship of Reconciliation in this country, have commented on the provisional statement of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on conscientious objectors. These comments express concerns regarding the statement in relation to the absolutist, the non-registrant, the CO provision by pacifist groups, and the non-Christian conscientious objector.

The following paragraph is an excerpt from the IFOR News Letter:

"On the other hand, there is no recognition of the notorious failings of the tribunals, including refusal in any circumstances to grant exemption without conditions. It was in fact these failings that led many C.O.'s to refuse to register or to refuse medical examination, and to face the magistrate straight away, with the prospect of imprisonment. There is always the absolutist C.O. who will have nothing to do with conditions, feeling that the conditions too often involve some participation in the defense system.

"There remains the general question as to whether any human tribunal can be expected to determine the character and sincerity of an objection, supposing an objector is willing to register and plead. But since some kind of tribunal seems to be indispensable, it is probable that, whatever legislation is passed, a percentage of C.O.'s will be bound to make their testimony in prison."

Following are several paragraphs taken from a statement by the Fellowship of Reconciliation in this country:

"There are one or two points at which the report may, in our view, be defective or subject to misunderstanding. The more serious of these is the suggested provision that 'in countries where legislation provides for the recognition of conscientious objection, C.O.'s should make use of such provisions, *including registration* and other arrangements for an orderly witness to conscience.'" . . .

"We recognize that refusal to register presents a difficult problem to government or state, and that it is extremely likely that such an act will be penalized. The FOR, however, has assured those of its members who under compulsion of conscience refuse to register of its support equally with those C.O.'s, who are willing and able to render alternative civilian service. This is also the prevailing attitude among the Historic Peace Churches in this country." . . . "We take note of the fact that in the course of the discussion last August there were those who questioned whether any provision should be made for C.O.'s and the suggestion was made a number of times that C.O.'s should be prepared to suffer for conscience' sake, that the C.O. stand should in no case be lightly taken, and that governments will in fact seek to guard against cowardly or irresponsible evasion of military service as distinct from conscientious refusal. There are some among us who would not have *pacifist* organizations make efforts to secure provision for C.O.'s." . . . "Although it appears from the language of the provisional report that the provisions which it recommends apply to all sincere conscientious objectors, we are informed that in the course of the discussion some apparently assumed that the document makes a distinction between the Christian C.O. and the non-Christian, and that there was some question how far such a document should go in reference to those who object for other than Christian reasons. It is our hope that any statement which may be adopted may not attempt to draw a distinction between the Christian and the Jewish C.O., for example, or the religious and so-called non-religious C.O. It appears to us that precisely from the Christian point of view no such discrimination against non-Christian or other sincere CO's should be advocated or encouraged by any agency of the church. The issue is one of individual conscience and sincerity, and any discrimination in favor of the Christian CO would appear to be inadmissible."

Information about the complete statements of these organizations can be secured by writing to the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 38 Gordon Square, London, W. C. 1, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 21 Audubon Avenue, New York, 32, N. Y.

The National Council of Churches, through its Department of International Justice and Good Will, has asked that all religious groups study the statement of the Central Committee on Conscientious Objectors and submit their comments. The significance of many groups doing this seems quite obvious.

Copies of the complete statement of The World Council Central Committee can be secured by writing NSB. The statement was printed in the September-October, 1951, REPORTER.

BENNO HABENICHT GRANTED PARDON BY PRESIDENT TRUMAN

Imprisoned During World War II

On August 21, 1952, President Truman signed a pardon for Benno Habenicht. who served a prison sentence during World War II as a conscientious objector. Benno contacted a pardon attorney 'n Washington, filled in several forms, and waited. Meantime the FBI made an investigation of the case, following which President Truman signed the pardon. Even though Mr. Habenicht has been out of jail these many years, his full rights of citizenship had not been restored.

"COs IN ARMED SERVICES" AVAILABLE

A very informative document which should be read by every young man considering application for the I-O classification, to do noncombatant service in the armed forces as a conscientious objector, is now available. It is a 20-page, mimeographed document prepared by George Loft and Lyle Tatum. It is available for 10c a copy from the NSBRO.

We also recommend the NSBRO release, made some months ago, entitled, "Memorandum on the I-A-O Position"; available for 5c.

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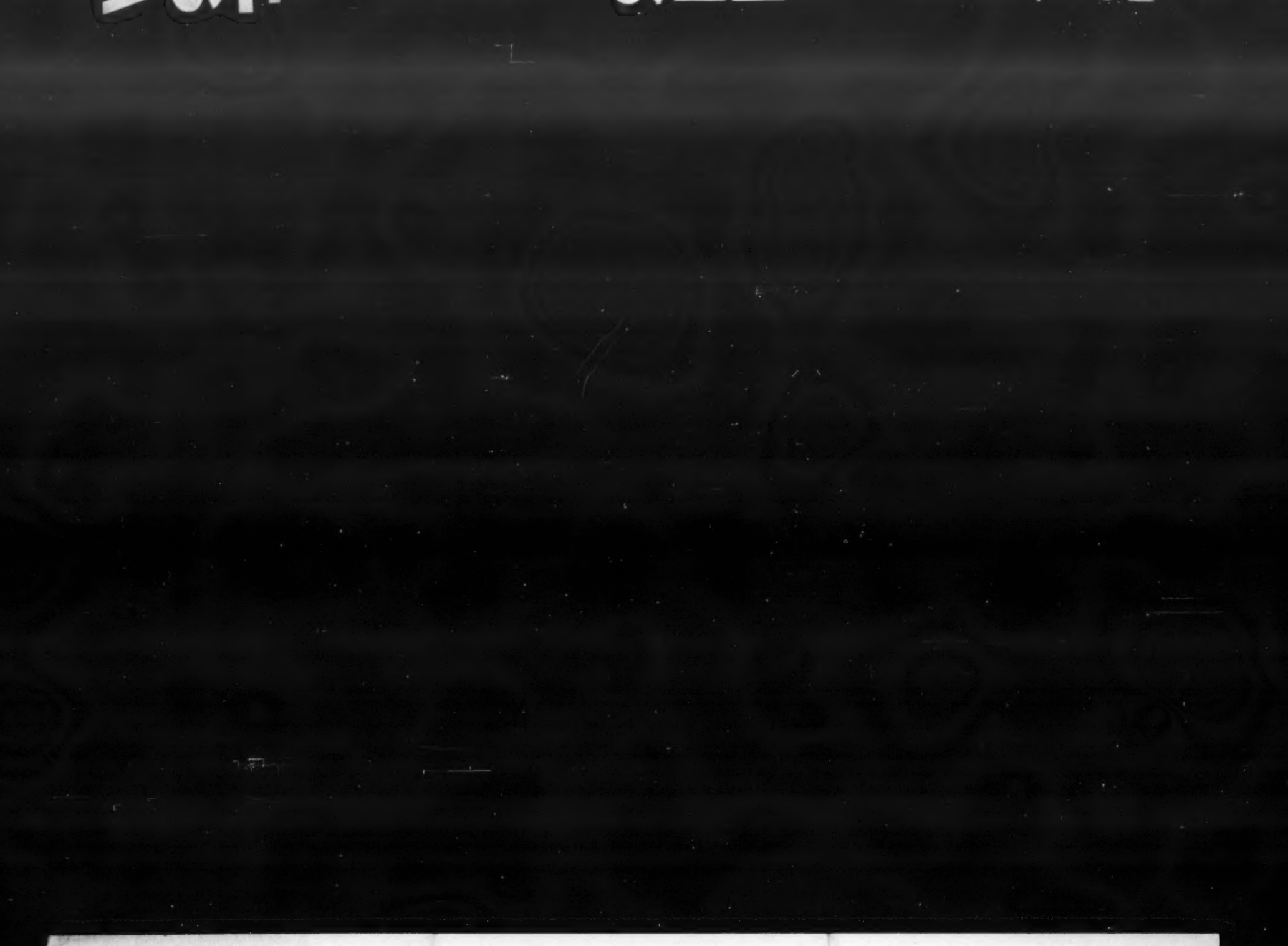
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